

Open Space, Recreation and Parks



Guidance • Support • Prevention • Protection

*Suzanne Kelley, MSW
Physical Activity Coordinator
Fit and Healthy Vermonters*

Agenda

- The connection between open space, parks, playgrounds & active living
- Strategies to enhance open space, parks, playgrounds
- Potential partners to enhance open space, parks, playgrounds

“Park and recreation facilities provide important
“behavior settings” in communities for
physical activity among residents of all ages.”

The Research

**Proximity to Parks = Higher
Levels of Physical Activity
Particularly for Youth**

**Facilities influence use &
activity levels:**

- **Fields, courts, trails**
- **Restrooms drinking fountains**

<http://activelivingresearch.org/resourcesearch/summaries>



Open Space

- Parks provide (often free) open space
- Open space in VT can also be for land conservation, wildlife protection, or recreation

Strategies to enhance open space, parks, playgrounds in your town

- Municipal &/or town plan goals
- Community advocacy
- Form/join a trail committee
- Consider joint use agreements
- Capitol expenditures for park, playground upgrades
- Access – hours, fees, lighting

Potential Partners

- Parks and recreation departments/committee
- Trails committee
- Town conservation committee
- Schools
- Community members interested in expanding recreational opportunities for all ages
- Active community organization or conservation land trust interested in preserving open land

Final thoughts

- Parks, recreation, outdoor spaces are an important piece to the PA puzzle and can be a great resource for communities
- Think creatively about partners and funding/support for parks and open space
- Consider amenities to increase the potential for people to be active.